

## NEWTON-WITH-CLIFTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the council's standing planning committee meeting held on Thursday 1st August 2024 commencing at 7.15 p.m. in Newton-with-Clifton Village Hall. Present: Councillors: Councillor Beverley Duckworth (chairman), Councillors Samuel Baugh, Jennifer C. Benson, Peter Collins, John Kitchen, Janette McCormick, Philip Morgan, Stephen Robinson, Benjamin Stephenson, Christopher Whitworth. Borough/County councillor: None, Police: None. Member of the public: Three

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

An apology for absence was received from Aimee Tombs.

### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

The chairman reminded members at the commencement of the meeting that any direct or indirect pecuniary, prejudicial, or other interest should be declared in accordance with the requirements of council's Standing Orders and the revised Code of Conduct adopted on 9th November 2012 in compliance with The Localism Act 2011. Accordingly the following direct or indirect, pecuniary, prejudicial, or other interest declarations were made; Councillor Jennifer C Benson formally Declared an Interest relating to any Hornbies Foundation/Hornbies Newton Charity agenda item and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon. Councillor P. Collins formally Declared an Interest, as a borough councillor planning committee member relating to any applications to be considered under the planning and development agenda item and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon. Councillor Beverley Duckworth (chairman) formally Declared an Interest relating to any Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) agenda items and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon. Councillor Mrs. J. McCormick formally Declared an Interest with regard to any finance related Friends of Newton Community Park (FoNCP) matters and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon. For the avoidance of any doubt, given the incorrect site address, Councillor Mrs. J. McCormick affirmed not having an interest in the development site relating to an anticipated planning application for a proposed solar farm by Bluefield renewable developments Ltd, subsequent to application 22/0204, request for screening opinion pursuant to the town and country planning (environmental impact assessment) regulations 2017 in respect of a 25mw solar farm, battery energy storage scheme and associated development, at land at Newton Grange Farm, Grange Lane, Newton-with-Scales, Preston Lancashire PR4 3RS. Councillor Benjamin Stephenson formally Declared an Interest, relating to any Newton-with-Clifton village hall committee agenda items and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon. Councillor Christopher Whitworth formally Declared an Interest, relating to any Newton-with-Clifton village hall committee agenda items and would not participate in the discussion or any voting thereon.

### **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.**

#### **a) Planning applications.**

**24/0396** Demolition of modular building and connecting external canopy walkway structure to side and rear of building and erection of a single storey rear extension at Newton Bluecoat Church of England School, School Lane, Newton-with-Scales, Preston, Lancashire PR4 3RT. Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the planning authority be advised it is recommended the application is granted planning permission.

**24/0414** Installation of 49.9-megawatt solar farm with associated infrastructure including: series of solar photovoltaic modules in arrays with string converters, transformers, substation, fencing and thermal CCTV cameras, access tracks, cabling, landscaping and other habitat creation at Clifton Marsh farm, Preston New Road, Clifton, Preston PR4 0XE. Proposed, Seconded and **RESOLVED** that the planning authority be advised it is recommended the application is refused planning permission;

#### **i) Consultation.**

On 25th May 2023, council notified both Fylde borough council and Lancashire county council, as the statutory planning authorities, regarding its concerns in respect of various potential renewable energy developments. Members expressed disquiet regarding the singular or cumulative impacts on the parish adversely affecting the character of the countryside, landscape, townscape, visual amenity, and the unfavourable impact on local residents arising from noise &c with consequential loss of amenity. Prior to their respective submissions, if any, arising from a future statutory consultation process, both authorities were requested to liaise and arrange a specific information event to include its planning officers, local

contd...Members of Parliament, borough, county, and parish councillors and provide planning and associated technical information relating to the proposals that would be transparently independent. It was anticipated this might subsequently lead to a more holistic approach being adopted by the developers and the planning authorities. In view of the fact that this proposed consultative approach was not progressed by the authorities the consultation process is perceived as flawed and the parish council is obliged to reiterate its concerns regarding cumulative and singular impacts of the proposed developments that still require to be assessed by the appropriate authorities.

ii) Development site land use.

The proposed development at Clifton Marsh farm impacts 68.7 hectares of farm land. Members are of the opinion that it is unclear whether all this land is, as claimed, Class 3b and therefore request clarification/confirmation in this regard. Council is concerned that a precedent might be unintentionally set by the planning authority whereby renewable energy projects in the parish countryside areas are prioritised in accordance with Policies CL3 and ENV1 of the adopted Fylde Local Plan to 2032 over future productivity for agricultural purposes. Members doubt whether this proposed major planning application proposal is the best non-agricultural use of land and consider this a material planning consideration in determining the application. The application indicates 68.7 hectares will generate 49.9MW of electricity. Other Nationally Significant Infrastructure renewable energy projects affecting the parish, currently being considered by the Planning Inspectorate, would produce 2GW on what is estimated by members as primarily an area of c.28 hectares plus land for the onshore export cable corridor routes from landfall to 2NO proposed new substations. The proposed transmission routes for the other projects have avoided the land related to the application under review. Moreover this development site does not appear to have ever been considered as a search area for 2NO sub-stations required for the other projects. It is considered by members that a more holistic approach between the planning authorities and developers has at least the potential for a more efficient use of available land and would mitigate the adverse impact on the countryside, farmland, and rural communities as currently proposed by the other developments.

iii) Electricity storage.

The application does not reference battery storage however there is a perception that, if not a probability, this would be a likely consequence within the lifespan of the project. Accordingly members consider the developer should be requested to provide clarification.

iv) Decision process.

Should the LPA case officer be minded granting the proposed development planning permission members will appreciate the matter being referred to the LPA's planning committee and request an assurance that the council's observations are duly considered, recorded in full and not otherwise abridged as part of a report.

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b) Renewable and low carbon energy generation development proposals.

i) Morecambe Offshore Windfarm Limited (Morecambe OWL), a joint venture between Cobra Instalaciones y Servicios, S.A. and Flotation Energy Ltd and Morecambe Offshore Windfarm. Morgan Offshore Wind Limited (Morgan OWL), a joint venture between bp and Energie Baden-Wurttemberg AG (EnBW), developing the Morgan Offshore Wind Project. Two joint venture companies are collaborating to connect the wind farms to the electricity transmission network. Following an enquiry by the chairman the clerk confirmed council's registration for the Morgan Generation Assets application being considered by the planning inspectorate. Members agreed to invite Andrew Snowden to attend a council meeting to discuss the applications.

ii) Proposed solar farm, Newton-with-Scales, Bluefield renewable developments Ltd, anticipated planning application subsequent to application 22/0204 request for screening opinion pursuant to the town and country planning (environmental impact assessment) regulations 2017 in respect of a 25mw solar farm, battery energy storage scheme and associated development, at land at Newton Grange Farm, Grange Lane, Newton-with-Scales, Preston Lancashire PR4 3RS. No update provided.

iii) Clifton Marsh Solar Development, Screening Report for proposed solar development on 68.7 hectares of agricultural land located at Clifton Marsh Farm, Preston, Lancashire PR4 0XE. This proposal has been progressed to a formal planning application 24/0414 which had been considered earlier in the meeting.

c) Fylde Borough Council (FBC) Planning Committee planning decisions/notifications and parish communications/notifications.

i) Fylde council - planning advisory service (PAS) review. No substantive update provided.

ii) Potential unauthorised development - number of commercial vehicle operations and range of industrial, warehouse, workshop business units at New Hey Farm, New Hey Lane Newton-with-Scales, Preston PR4 3SB. A Newton ward member reported complaints from parishioners relating to alleged ongoing development operations at the above address. It was agreed the matter should be referred to FBC for investigation. The issues apparently involve Heavy Goods Vehicle operations In the opinion of members the complaints, if upheld, should also be referred byon to the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency/Traffic Commissioners by the planning authority. Members were unaware of any recent planning/building control application(s).

iii) Planning consultation 23/0565 Retrospective application for change of use of land to form 1NO. gypsy/traveller pitch containing two static caravans and up to two touring caravans with associated ancillary outbuildings, stables, kennel, fencing and gates at "Gavin's croft" Parrox Lane Newton-with-Scales Preston PR4 3RW. A Newton ward member referred to this issue and it was agreed FBC should be requested to provide an update relating to the application together with other applications relating to this development.

Meeting closed at 20:30hrs.

Chairman

5th September 2024